

# The Savior of Sinners



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**Thrust Statement:** Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

**Scripture Reading:** 1 Timothy 1:12-17

Do you want redemption from your sins? Do you want eternal life? Do you want to spend eternity with God? Do you want to escape the wrath of God? Are you afraid to die? Are you terrified about dying because you know that you fall short of God's glory? Are you alarmed about the judgment? How are you answering these questions? Fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus, 3000 troubled individuals asked the apostles what to do to be saved. Luke records their response to Peter's castigation of them for crucifying the Lord of Glory ([Acts 2:36](#)). When they came under conviction, Luke says, "When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'" ([Acts 2:37](#)).<sup>[1]</sup>

Do you think that you are too sinful for God to save? Have you ever persecuted Christians? Have you ever pursued Christians in order to imprison them for their faith? Have you ever stood at the feet of someone who was murdered for his/her faith in Christ? Well, the one who wrote our Scripture reading did persecute and incarcerate Christians for their faith. And because of this period in his life, he writes about his remorse and God's mercy:

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.** But for that very reason I was

shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen (**1 Timothy 1:12-17**).

Paul says that God is able to display His unlimited patience by using him as an example for those who believe on Him and receive eternal life. One can understand why Paul stood in awe as he spoke of this abundant grace.

## THE COMING OF THE SAVIOR

As Paul reflected upon the grandeur of it all, he declares that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (**1 Timothy 1:15**). Matthew also records the announcement of His birth and His objective in coming: “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (**Matthew 1:21**). John writes that “The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us” (**John 1:14**). Jesus tells Nicodemus that

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son (**John 3:16-18**).

Is it any wonder that Paul exclaims, “Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great: He appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory” (**1 Timothy 3:16**).

## THE NAME CHRIST

Matthew begins his gospel with these words: “A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham” (**Matthew 1:1**). In this passage, Matthew combines the names Jesus and Christ. In this same chapter, Matthew records the announcement of an angel of the Lord concerning the birth of Jesus: “you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (**1:21**). Following the birth of Jesus, Herod called the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law to inquire about the Christ: “where the Christ was to be born” (**Matthew 2:4**)? Toward the end of Christ’s ministry, he asked the disciples: “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” (**Matthew 16:13**). Following the various responses (**16:14**), “Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (**Matthew 16:16**).

The name “Jesus” means Jehovah is salvation, but then the name “Christ” means anointed. In other words, Jesus the savior is God’s Anointed One. Jesus is THE ANOINTED ONE OF GOD for the salvation of humanity. Peter, before the Sanhedrin, exclaims: “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (**Acts 4:12**). Jesus is the answer to man’s greatest need—eternal life. Only Jesus can take care of man’s sin problem. Just the mention of the name of Jesus causes ten thousand times ten thousands to cry out: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (**1 Timothy 1:15**). Paul burst forth in rapturous language to the Philippians concerning the name Jesus:

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
that at the name of **Jesus** every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue confess that **Jesus Christ** is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father (**Philippians 2:9-11**).

## THE NATURE OF CHRIST

Perhaps, one can say that Christ reveals His divine nature, while Jesus reveals His human nature. Jesus is our Lord's name, while Christ is our Lord's official appellation. Peter, in his Pentecost sermon, calls attention to the resurrection of Jesus and says, "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (**Acts 2:36**). John in writing his Gospel refers to the deity as well as to the humanity of our Lord Jesus. He declares that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.<sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning" (**John 1:1-2**). Then, in **verse 14**, he again says, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."

Jesus, in his prayer to the Father, prays, "**And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began**" (**John 17:5**). Thomas, in his encounter with the Lord after His resurrection, acknowledged Jesus as "My Lord and my God!" (**John 20:28**). Paul also addresses His divine as well as human nature to the Philippians:

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,  
but made himself nothing,  
taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.  
And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient to death—  
even death on a cross! (**Philippians 2:5-8**).

My prayer for all of you is that you remember the words of Paul to Timothy: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men" (**1 Timothy 2:5**). Jesus came into the world to seek and save the lost.

## REDEMPTION IN THE SAVIOR

When one speaks of redemption, one cannot help but recall the words of Paul to Timothy: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (**1 Timothy 1:15**). In the redeeming work of Christ, Paul found pardon. But Paul's point of emphasis is not just for himself, but rather, for the whole world. Pardon is for you and me; it is for everyone who

is here. Paul declares that he “was shown mercy” (1:13). He was a former “blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man” (1:13). But, in spite of all these terrible crimes, he says, “The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly” (1:14). Paul was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a violent man against Christianity, but in spite of all his sins, he says, “I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life” (1:16).

### **The Savior’s Power**

How often do individuals say, “I am afraid that I would not be able to keep it up.” Did Paul say this also? No! Here is what he said, “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service” (1 Timothy 1:12). Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, declares: “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6). If Christians can ever capture the concept that it is God working in them, then they will no longer say, “I am afraid that I would not be able to keep it up.” Christians are to shine as stars in the universe in a crooked and depraved generation (1:15). Again, listen to Paul: “Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose” (Philippians 2:12-13).

### **The Savior’s Purpose**

**First Timothy 1:16** is a verse that every person should focus upon in his/her walk with God. In seeking to call attention to neglected truths, repetition is unavoidable. Listen again to what Paul is saying: “for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life.” There was a purpose for which the Lord had saved him. There is also a purpose for which the Lord has saved you. God has a plan for all who enter into Christ’s redemptive purpose. It is written: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).

Christians no longer live for themselves, but rather, they live for God. God’s purpose is that no believer should live for himself/herself. Paul captures the essence of the Christian life in his second letter to the Christians at Corinth: “For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Having said this, Paul continues the development of this thought of living for God:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I remind each of you—non-Christians and Christians—to not receive the grace of God in vain. Christians can receive God's grace in vain by the way they live. Non-Christians can receive the grace of God in vain by rejecting God's way of salvation, namely, Jesus Christ. Paul warns the Corinthians: "As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. For he says, 'In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.' I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation" (**2 Corinthians 6:1-2**).

Do you want salvation? Do you want redemption from your life of sin? Do you want peace with God? Do you want to escape the wrath of God? Do you want to escape the dominion of sin? Do you want to escape condemnation? Then remember the words of Paul: "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (**1 Timothy 1:15**). Christ Jesus is an acceptable Savior. The truth about the savior of sinners is followed in our text by a doxology of honor and glory to the Lord Jesus whom Paul calls "Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever" (**1:17**). The words of Isaac Watts express this so beautifully:

When I survey the wondrous cross,  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss,  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Where the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small;  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

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Message Delivered  
at the Following  
Congregations

Oakwood Hills Church  
DeFuniak Springs, FL  
Date: June 20, 1999  
Time: 10 am  
Occasion: Gospel Meeting  
Present:

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<sup>[1]</sup> All Scripture citations are from *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984, unless stated otherwise.